

November 15, 2015

The Instructional Quality Commission
California Department of Education
1430 N. St.
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Re: Implementation of AB199 – the role of the Filipinos during World War II

Dear Members of the Instructional Quality Commission:

I am writing to give my utmost support to Bataan Legacy Historical Society's efforts to implement AB199 to include the role of the Filipinos and World War II in the Philippines in the curriculum framework for Grade 11 U.S. History.

The Philippines was a colony of the United States from 1898 to 1946. During World War II, its defense was compromised because of the Europe First Policy. But Filipino and American soldiers of the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (USAFPE) put up a valiant fight against a better equipped and highly experienced enemy. Despite promises of reinforcement, no help ever came to the soldiers of USAFFE. A majority of the soldiers were already suffering from massive disease and starvation by time of their surrender on April 9, 1942. The brutal treatment by their Japanese captors during the forced march of 60 miles claimed the lives of an estimated 10,000 Filipino and 750 American soldiers. Another 20,000 Filipinos and 1,600 Americans died as prisoners of war. During the battle of Manila between February and March, 1945, an estimated 100,000 civilians perished and by the end of the war, approximately 1,000,000 civilians lost their lives in the Philippines.

The Filipinos have contributed so much in the history of the United States especially in California where they constitute the largest Asian-American population. Their role in the Battle of Bataan during World War II delayed the timetable of the Imperial Japanese Army of 52 days and enabled the Allied Forces to harness the necessary resources that eventually led to their ultimate victory. In the United States, the Filipinos played seminal roles in the labor and civil rights movements and health care. But these contributions are not reflected in today's history.

We urge the members of the Instructional Quality Commission to implement AB199 to reflect the true contributions of the Filipinos during World War II. There are only a handful of Filipino WWII veteran survivors left. They have sacrificed much and waited for more than seven decades to achieve truth and justice.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Angie Desuyo Estonina
Elementary Supervisor Multilingual Pathways Department